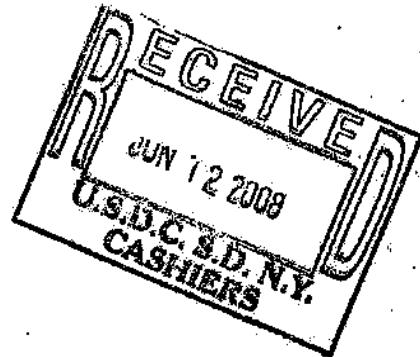


JUDGE CEDARBAUGH

08 CV 5384 S&S COPY

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

ASYLUM HILL CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC.,

Defendant.

ECF CASE: MGC  
Civil Action No.: 08 CV 5384

**COMPLAINT**

The plaintiff, Harlem Children's Zone, Inc. ("Harlem Children's Zone"), for its Complaint against the defendant, Asylum Hill Children's Zone, Inc. ("Asylum Hill Children's Zone"), hereby alleges as follows:

**PARTIES**

1. Plaintiff Harlem Children's Zone is a 501(c)(3) corporation organized under the laws of the state of New York, having its principal place of business at 35 East 125th Street, New York, NY 10035.

2. On information and belief, defendant Asylum Hill Children's Zone is a 501(c)(3) corporation organized under the laws of the state of Connecticut, having its principal place of business at 814 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06105.

3. This is an action for violation of Section 32(1) and Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act and for unfair competition under state law. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1121 and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a) and (b). Venue in this District is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331(b) and (c).

#### **HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE**

4. Harlem Children's Zone is a service organization that is well known nationwide for its development of a new and unique approach to improving the lives of disadvantaged children. Based in a poverty-stricken area of Central Harlem in New York City, Harlem Children's Zone provides services to thousands of children within a 100-block area of New York City. Beginning with expectant parent(s), Harlem Children's Zone focuses on families, communities and every aspect of a child's life from birth through college. Its programs encompass a wide range of services: parenting classes, early childhood, medical, mental health, education, college preparation, housing, social and community (the "Harlem Children's Zone Model" or the "Harlem Children's Zone Services"). As New York City Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein has said, "It's exactly the right model. It combines family, community, and school — starts at the youngest age and is really a soup to nuts approach."

5. Through its Practitioners Institute, Harlem Children's Zone shares its best practice programs with other groups that seek to develop the Harlem Children's Zone Model to adapt to their local communities. With the consent of Harlem Children's Zone, this revolutionary approach to child poverty has been adopted by organizations in other cities throughout the United States. To date, groups, individuals and governmental representatives

from more than 80 communities throughout the United States and from more than 25 countries have paid to attend the Practitioners Institute. Although Harlem Children's Zone offers its expertise to benefit other groups, it does not license its mark "Harlem Children's Zone" to organizations that adopt the Harlem Children's Zone Model.

6. In a June 2004 cover story in *The New York Times Magazine*, the work of Harlem Children's Zone was called "one of the most ambitious social experiments of our time." (Exhibit A hereto.) The work of Harlem Children's Zone has been the subject of many profiles in the media across the country. Its work has been featured on "60 Minutes," "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "The Today Show," "Good Morning America," "Nightline," "CBS This Morning," "The Charlie Rose Show," National Public Radio's "On Point," as well as in articles in *The New York Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The New York Daily News*, *USA Today*, *Newsday*, *The Boston Globe*, and *Town and Country* magazine.

7. The presumptive nominee of the Democratic Party for President of the United States, U.S. Senator Barack Obama, in a speech in Des Moines, Iowa, on November 10, 2007, pledged (if elected President) to establish 20 Promise Neighborhoods modeled after the Harlem Children's Zone in areas with high poverty and high crime levels. Calling Harlem Children's Zone a "powerful beacon of light shedding rays of hope" throughout Harlem, former President Bill Clinton, on January 19, 2005, helped open the Harlem Children's Zone headquarters and announced the beginning of a collaborative effort among Harlem Children's Zone, the Clinton Foundation, and Teachers College, Columbia University. Geoffrey Canada, the President, and Chief Executive Officer of Harlem Children's Zone, was appointed last year by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to co-chair a task force to combat poverty in New York City and was named in 2005

as one of "America's Best Leaders" by *U.S. News & World Report*. He also was appointed in 2007 to co-chair NY Governor's Children's Cabinet Advisory Board.

8. Harlem Children's Zone owns, uses and continues to use five trade names and/or service marks in connection with its services: (i) "Harlem Children's Zone" (the "Harlem Children's Zone Mark"), which was first used in commerce in December 2006; (ii) an abbreviated form of the Harlem Children's Zone Mark, *i.e.*, "Children's Zone," (the "Children's Zone Mark"), which was first used in commerce in December 1996; (iii) a colorful design logo combined with the Harlem Children's Zone Mark (the "Harlem Children's Zone Logo"), which was first used in commerce on April 30, 2002; (iv) the same colorful design logo without words (the "Harlem Children's Zone Design Logo"), which was first used in commerce on April 30, 2002; and (v) "HCZ," the acronym for Harlem Children's Zone (the "HCZ Mark"), which was first used in commerce on October 31, 1997 (collectively, the Harlem Children's Zone Mark, the Children's Zone Mark, the Harlem Children's Zone Logo, the Harlem Children's Zone Design Logo, and the HCZ Mark are hereinafter referred to as the "Harlem Children's Zone Marks"). Through years of use, extensive publicity and widespread news reports, the Harlem Children's Zone Marks have become well known throughout the United States and have acquired tremendous valuable goodwill.

9. The Harlem Children's Zone Mark has been duly registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office ("PTO") under U.S. Registration No. 2,798,777, dated December 23, 2003. The Children's Zone Mark has been duly registered in the PTO under U.S. Registration No. 3,248,239, dated May 29, 2007. The Harlem Children's Zone Logo has been duly registered in the PTO under Registration No. 2,801,068, dated December 30, 2003. The Harlem Children's Zone Design Logo has been duly registered in the PTO under Registration

No. 2,801,069, dated December 30, 2003. The HCZ Mark has been duly registered in the PTO under Registration No. 3,301,992, dated October 2, 2007. All of the aforesaid registrations are valid, in full force and effect, and Harlem Children's Zone is the record owner thereof. A copy of each certificate of registration is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

10. Harlem Children's Zone operates a web site at "www.hcz.org." (See pages from the Harlem Children's Zone web site at Exhibit C hereto).

11. In 2007, contributions to Harlem Children's Zone from individuals, corporations, and foundations totaled over \$60 million. In 2008, to date, private contributions have totaled more than \$41 million.

#### **ASYLUM HILL CHILDREN'S ZONE**

12. Upon information and belief, on or about December 19, 1990, a Connecticut corporation was formed named Safepathways, Inc. ("Safepathways"). Upon information and belief, in July 2003, representatives from Safepathways visited Harlem Children's Zone to participate in the Harlem Children's Zone's Practitioners Institute and made subsequent visits and telephone calls to Harlem Children's Zone to seek its advice. Without the consent of Harlem Children's Zone, on March 30, 2004, Safepathways filed an amended Certificate of Incorporation with the Connecticut Secretary of State, changing its name from Safepathways to Asylum Hill Children's Zone. Representatives of defendant then attended the Practitioners Institute again in March 2005 and made further telephone phone calls to Harlem Children's Zone after this visit. All visits and contacts were for the purpose of obtaining information pertaining to the Harlem Children's Zone Model, and Harlem Children's Zone provided such information to defendant. Yet, without the consent of Harlem Children's Zone, Asylum Hill Children's Zone began to use the name and mark "Asylum Hill Children's Zone" (the "Asylum Children's Zone

Mark") in connection with its services based on the Harlem Children's Zone Model, upon information and belief, in or about 2005.

**HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH ASYLUM HILL CHILDREN'S ZONE AND ASYLUM HILL CHILDREN'S ZONE'S WEB SITE**

13. In 2006 or early 2007, Harlem Children's Zone contacted Asylum Hill Children's Zone by telephone to request that it refrain from use of the Children's Zone Mark as part of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark. On January 31, 2007, Harlem Children's Zone followed up this telephone contact with a cease and desist letter to Asylum Hill Children's Zone.

14. Not only did Asylum Hill fail to respond to the January 31, 2007 letter from Harlem Children's Zone, but, upon information and belief, in May 2007, Asylum Hill Children's Zone launched a web site at "www.ahcz.org," containing numerous references to the Harlem Children's Zone and use of the Harlem Children's Zone Marks. (A true and correct copy of pages from the web site copied on May 8, 2008 is annexed as Exhibit D hereto.) The use of the Harlem Children's Zone Marks, the domain name "www.ahcz.org," and the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark, all lead the public to mistakenly believe that Asylum Hill Children's Zone and Harlem Children's Zone are related or affiliated.

15. The references on the Asylum Hill Children's Zone web site to the Harlem Children's Zone include the following:

- Use of the Harlem Children's Zone Mark;
- A statement that Asylum Hill Children's zone is "patterned on the successful Harlem Children's Zone;"
- Designated areas or headings on the web site as "Harlem Children's Zone;"
- A copy of the Harlem Children's Zone's working thesis (on the first home page):

*"If you really want to change the lives of inner-city kids, change everything -- their schools, their families, their neighborhood -- all at once."*

- The claim that Asylum Hill Children's Zone has a "relationship with the Harlem Children's Zone;"
- Use of the Harlem Children's Zone Logo;
- The display of a photograph of the Harlem Children's Zone Headquarters building in Harlem; and
- A hyperlink to the web site of Harlem Children's Zone.

16. Upon first discovery of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone web site, and having not received any reply to its January 31, 2007 letter to Asylum Hill Children's Zone, Harlem Children's Zone sent another letter to Asylum Hill Children's Zone on October 3, 2007. Further letters were exchanged between Harlem Children's Zone and Asylum Hill Children's Zone or their counsel. Notwithstanding repeated requests, Asylum Hill Children's Zone continued to use and currently uses the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone's Marks.

**COUNT I**

**Federal Service Mark Infringement**

17. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 16 as if fully set forth therein.

18. This cause of action for federal service mark infringement arises under Section 32 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. 1114(1).

19. The activities of the defendant complained of herein constitute willful and intentional infringement of plaintiff's federally registered service marks and have continued in

spite of defendant's knowledge that the use of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks were and are in direct contravention of plaintiff's proprietary rights in the Harlem Children's Zone Marks.

20. The defendant's uses of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks as described herein create a likelihood that a false and unfair association will be made between the defendant's organization and the plaintiff's organization in that the consuming public is likely to erroneously believe that the defendant's services are in some manner sponsored, approved, authorized by or otherwise associated with plaintiff.

21. The defendant's uses of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks are likely to cause confusion, mistake or deception.

22. By reason of the acts of the defendant alleged herein, plaintiff has been damaged and unless defendant is restrained from continuing its wrongful acts, the damage to plaintiff, which is irreparable, will increase.

23. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law.

#### COUNT II

##### **Unfair Competition and False Designation of Origin**

24. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 23 as if set forth herein.

25. This cause of action arises under Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. 11225(a).

26. Defendant's uses of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks constitute false descriptions and representations and false designations of the origin of services by defendant in violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. 1125(a).

27. Plaintiff has no control over the quality of the services that are promoted, advertised and provided by defendant under the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks with the result that plaintiff's valuable goodwill in its Harlem Children's Zone Marks is no longer within its control.

28. Upon information and belief, defendant will continue to make such false designations of origin in connection with the provision of services rendered in commerce unless restrained by this Court.

29. As a result of defendant's false descriptions and representations, plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer irreparable injury for which there is no adequate remedy at law.

**COUNT III**

**Common Law Trade Name and Service Mark Infringement and Unfair Competition**

30. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations set forth in paragraphs 1 through 29 as if set forth herein.

31. Defendant's uses of the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark and the Harlem Children's Zone Marks constitute acts of trade name and service mark infringement and unfair competition in violation of the common law of the state of New York and every other state wherein defendant advertises or publicizes its name as "Asylum Hill Children's Zone" and uses the Harlem Children's Zone Marks.

32. The acts and conduct of defendant complained of herein have damaged plaintiff, and will, unless restrained, further impair the value of the Harlem Children's Zone Marks to plaintiff and the goodwill associated therewith.

33. Defendant has engaged and continues to engage in these activities knowingly and willfully.

34. Defendant's acts of trade name and service mark infringement and unfair competition, unless enjoined by this Court, will continue to cause plaintiff to sustain irreparable damage, loss and injury for which plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law.

35. The unauthorized acts by defendant in connection with its advertising and promotion of its services constitutes trade name and service mark infringement of plaintiff's Harlem Children's Zone Marks and unfair competition with plaintiff, and are likely to cause confusion and mistake in the minds of the public as to the source of origin of defendant's services.

WHEREFORE, plaintiff demands:

A. That the defendant, its members, directors, officers, agents, servants, employees, representatives, successors and assigns and all persons, or organizations in active concert or participation or affiliated with each of them, be enjoined and restrained, during the pendency of this action and permanently from:

(1) directly or indirectly infringing or contributing to the infringement of the Harlem Children's Zone Marks in any manner, including generally, but not limited to, promoting, distributing, advertising, selling or offering any services under a mark that infringes said service, and specifically,

(a) using the Harlem Children's Zone Marks or the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark or any name or mark confusingly similar thereto, in connection with the promotion, distribution, advertising, or providing services;

(b) applying the Harlem Children's Zone Marks or the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark or any name or mark that is confusingly similar

thereto, on any advertisement or promotional material used in connection with the provision of services;

- (2) using any designation, trade name, service mark, trademark, logo or design that tends falsely to represent, or is likely to confuse, mislead, or deceive purchasers, customers, members of the public, or members of the trade into the belief that unauthorized services distributed, promoted, advertised, sold or offered for sale by defendant originate from plaintiff, or that said services have been sponsored, approved or licensed by or associated with plaintiff or are in some way connected or affiliated with plaintiff;
- (3) otherwise infringing the Harlem Children's Zone Marks or competing unfairly with plaintiff in any manner or damaging plaintiff's respective goodwill, reputation or business;
- (4) registering the Asylum Hill Children's Zone Mark or any variation thereof, in the United States; and
- (5) using the domain name "www.aghz.com."

- B. That defendant execute and deliver to plaintiff necessary documents to withdraw as the registrant of the domain name "www.aghz.com;"
- C. An award of damages arising from defendant's acts of trade name and service mark infringement, false designation of origin, and unfair competition;
- D. That plaintiff be awarded all costs, disbursements and plaintiff's reasonable attorneys' fees; and
- E. That plaintiff receive all other and further relief as the Court may deem just and equitable under the circumstances.

**JURY TRIAL DEMAND**

Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 38(b), plaintiff demands a trial by jury of all the claims asserted in this Complaint.

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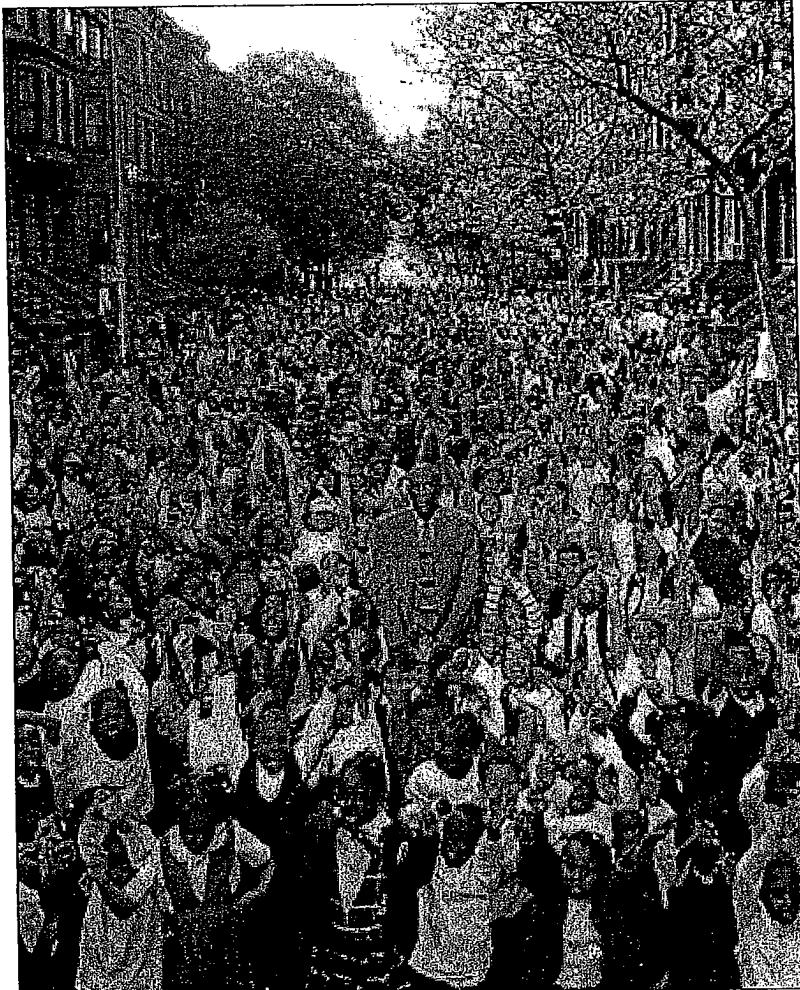
Exhibit A

New York Times Magazine  
June 20, 2004

## The Harlem Project

By PAUL TOUGH

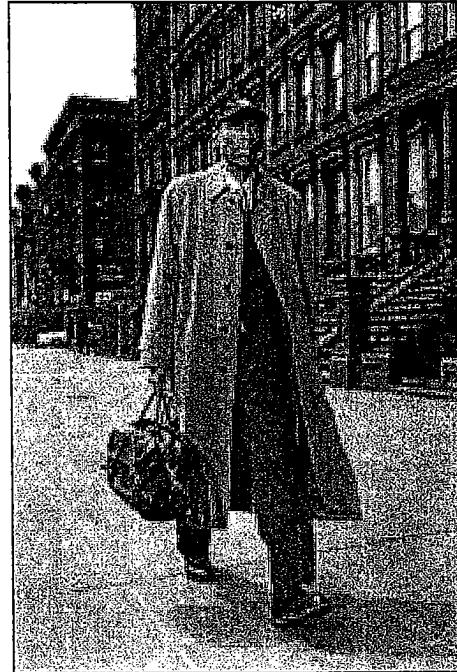
Back in 1990, Geoffrey Canada was just your average do-gooder. That year, he became the president of a nonprofit charitable organization based in Harlem called the Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, and he set out trying to improve the world, one poor child at a time. It was a bad moment to be poor in New York City. Harlem, especially, was suffering under the simultaneous plagues of crack cocaine, cheap guns and rampant homelessness, and Canada's main goal at Rheedlen, in those years, was to keep the children in his programs alive. The organization had an annual budget of \$3 million, which it spent on a predictable array of services in Upper Manhattan: after-school programs, truancy prevention, anti-violence training for teenagers. The programs seemed to do a lot of good for the children who were enrolled in them, at least in part because of Canada's own level of devotion. He was obsessed with his job, personally invested in the lives of the children he was helping and devastated when they ended up in prison or on drugs or shot dead on the street.



But after he ran these programs for a few years, day in and day out, his ideas about poverty started to change. The catalyst was surprisingly simple: a waiting list. One Rheedlen after-school program had more children who wanted to enroll than it was able to admit. So Canada chose the obvious remedy: he drew up a waiting list, and it quickly filled with the names of children who needed his help and couldn't get it. That bothered him, and it kept bothering him, and before long it had him thinking differently about his entire organization. Sure, the 500

children who were lucky enough to be participating in one of his programs were getting help, but why those 500 and not the 500 on the waiting list? Or why not another 500 altogether? For that matter, why 500 and not 5,000? If all he was doing was picking some kids to save and letting the rest fail, what was the point?

At around the same time, he was invited by Marian Wright Edelman, the president of the Children's Defense Fund, to join a group she had recently founded called the Black Community Crusade for Children. Once a year, she brought together two dozen leaders from across the country who were trying to solve the problems of poor black children. They met down at a farm in Tennessee that had once been owned by Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," and they spent a few days comparing notes on the crisis in America's poor neighborhoods. For Canada, the good news at these discussions was that he wasn't alone -- but that was the bad news, too. All across the country, in big cities and in small towns, well-meaning nonprofits were finding the same thing: they were helping a few kids, getting them out of the ghettos and off the streets and sometimes even into college, but for the masses of poor children, and especially those who were black, nothing was changing; those children were still falling behind in school, scoring below average on reading tests and staying poor.



Geoffrey Canada in the zone -- 60 blocks of Harlem.

Most of the men and women who were meeting in Tennessee were from Canada's generation -- he is 52 -- and they had come of age in the hopeful period following the passage of the Civil Rights Act, when things seemed as if they were about to improve for poor black Americans. But as Edelman convened her group, life in the ghettos was getting worse, not better. To Canada, it felt as if he and his peers were losing more children more quickly than they had ever lost before. For the first time, he felt a sense of hopelessness, and he found himself thinking that the kids he was seeing in kindergarten in Harlem were already doomed, destined to spend the rest of their lives stuck at the bottom.

Canada knew there were success stories out there. There were always reports in the newspapers about "special" kids who "overcame the odds. " Some brilliant teacher or charity or millionaire went into the ghetto and found 100 kids and educated them and turned their lives around. But those stories seemed counterproductive to Canada. Instead of helping some kids beat the odds, he thought, why don't we just change the odds? When he looked around, though, he couldn't find anyone who knew how to do that. Experts in his field had figured out how to educate one disadvantaged child, or one classroom full of kids, but the benefits were localized, and usually temporary. And no one had any idea how to change a whole school system or a whole housing project, or for that matter a whole neighborhood. So, in the middle of the 1990's, that's what Geoffrey Canada decided he would do. And now, 10 years later, he has become a very different

kind of do-gooder, one with a mission both radically ambitious and startlingly simple. He wants to prove that poor children, and especially poor black children, can succeed -- that is, achieve good reading scores, good grades and good graduation rates -- and not just the smartest or the most motivated or the ones with the most attentive parents, but all of them, in big numbers. Three years ago, he chose as his laboratory a 24-block zone of central Harlem, now expanded to 60 blocks -- an area with about 6,500 children, more than 60 percent of whom live below the poverty line and three-quarters of whom score below grade level on statewide reading and math tests -- and he named it the Harlem Children's Zone.

After welfare reform passed in 1996, the national debate on poverty seemed simply to shut down. Most conservatives explain poverty by looking to culture and behavior: bad parenting, high out-of-wedlock birth rates, teenagers who don't know the value of an honest day's work. To most liberals, the real problems are economic: underfinanced public schools and a dearth of well-paying semiskilled jobs, which make it nearly impossible for families to pull themselves out of poverty. Canada says he believes that both assumptions are true. He agrees that the economy is stacked against poor people no matter how hard they work, but he also thinks that poor parents aren't doing a good enough job of rearing their children. What makes Canada's project unique is that it addresses both problems at once. He keeps the liberals happy by pouring money into schools and day-care centers and after-school programs, and he satisfies the conservatives by directly taking on the problems of inadequate parenting and the cultural disadvantages of a ghetto home life. It's not just that he's trying to work both sides of the ideological street. It's that Canada has concluded that neither approach has a chance of working alone. Fix the schools without fixing the families and the community, and children will fail; but they will also fail if you improve the surrounding community without fixing the schools.

Canada's new program combines educational, social and medical services. It starts at birth and follows children to college. It meshes those services into an interlocking web, and then it drops that web over an entire neighborhood. It operates on the principle that each child will do better if all the children around him are doing better. So instead of waiting for residents to find out about the services on their own, the organization's recruiters go door-to-door to find participants, sometimes offering prizes and raffles and free groceries to parents who enroll their children in the group's programs. What results is a remarkable level of "market penetration," as the organization describes it. Eighty-eight percent of the roughly 3,400 children under 18 in the 24-block core neighborhood are already served by at least one program, and this year Canada began to extend his programs to the larger 60-block zone. The objective is to create a safety net woven so tightly that children in the neighborhood just can't slip through.

At a moment when each new attempt to solve the problem of poverty seems to fall apart, one after the next, what is going on in central Harlem is one of the biggest social experiments of our



ON THE AIR Teenagers in Truce, an after-school program, learn video production skills.

time. Social scientists and poverty advocates are watching carefully to see if Canada can pull it off. Many are skeptical; they have seen too many ambitious anti-poverty programs collapse because of budget overruns or administrative hubris, and Canada acknowledges that his work has just begun. But the sheer scale of Canada's project has created a palpable excitement among foundation officials, poverty scholars and business leaders. Marian Wright Edelman said that though there are a few other good neighborhood-based programs around the country, "none are as comprehensive as the Harlem Children's Zone, and none of them hold as much promise. "

David Saltzman, executive director of the Robin Hood Foundation, concurred: "If it works, it'll be the best thing that's happened in a long time. Man, if Geoff can make this thing work, it's huge. "

The programs that the Harlem Children's Zone offers all seem carefully planned and well run, but none of them, on their own, are particularly revolutionary. It is only when they are considered together, as a network, that they seem so new. The organization employs more than 650 people in more than 20 programs; on a recent afternoon, I spent some time walking around Harlem, dropping in on one program after another. At Harlem Gems, a program for 40 prekindergarten students at a public school on 118th Street, Keith, who had just turned 5 and was missing a front tooth, sat at a computer working away at "Hooked on Phonics," while Luis, a 19-year-old tutor, gave him one-on-one instruction. A few blocks up Lenox Avenue, at the Employment and Technology Center, 30 teenagers in T-shirts and basketball jerseys, all part of the organization's new investment club, were gathered around a conference table, listening to an executive from Lehman Brothers explain the difference between the Dow Jones and the Nasdaq. At P.S. 76 on West 121st Street, fifth-grade students in an after-school program were standing in front of their peers, reading aloud the autobiographies they had written that afternoon. And over at Truce, the after-school center for teenagers, a tutor named Carl was helping Trevis, a student in the eighth grade, with a research project for his social studies class, an eight-page paper on the life of Frederick Douglass. In a nearby housing project, a counselor from the Family Support Center was paying a home visit to a woman who had just been granted legal custody of her two grandchildren; in other apartments in the neighborhood, outreach workers from Baby College, a class for new parents, were making home visits of their own, helping teach better parenting techniques. A few blocks away, at the corner of Madison Avenue and 125th Street, construction was under way on the organization's new headquarters, a six-story, \$44 million building that will also house the Promise Academy, a new charter school that Canada is opening in the fall.

While the new building is going up, Canada works on Park Avenue between 130th Street and 131st Street, in a small office in a six-story building that always seems to be under renovation. When I visited him on an icy afternoon in February, the



ON THE FLOOR Preschoolers in Harlem Gems are taught music and movement, French and reading.

radiator in his office was hissing constantly; when the room got too hot, Canada propped his window open with a book about community revitalization. That cooled things off, but it also created a new distraction. Directly outside Canada's second-floor window, no more than 20 feet away, are the elevated tracks that carry every Metro-North train heading out of Grand Central Terminal toward Connecticut and Westchester County. Each time a train passed, full of commuters on their way back to the suburbs, a rumbling filled the room, and Canada leaned a little closer so that I could make out what he was saying.

He is a tall, lean, athletic man with rounded shoulders and long limbs, and on this afternoon he was wearing a dark suit and a light blue shirt with his monogram sewn over the breast pocket. His graying hair was cropped close to his scalp. His office is spare -- a desk with a phone and a computer and a few piles of mail. There's a coat rack for his suit jacket, a bookshelf and a small round table with four chairs where he holds meetings. On his desk is a big picture of his 5-year-old son, Geoffrey Jr. , from his second marriage. On the wall behind his desk are photographs -- Canada with President Clinton, Canada with Mayor Bloomberg -- as well as a portrait of a dozen or so of the young people he has trained in tae kwon do, which he has been teaching two nights a week for 21 years. A framed citation on the opposite wall certifies him as a third-degree black belt.

Although Canada likes to say that he is sick of against-the-odds success stories, he is one himself. He grew up on Union Avenue in the South Bronx. His father left when he was 4, and his mother reared him and his three brothers herself, sometimes supporting them with wages from menial jobs and sometimes relying on welfare and food from local charities. In his memoir "Fist Stick Knife Gun," Canada describes the rituals and codes of violence that governed life for children like him, growing up in the inner city in the 50's and 60's. As a teenager, he drank and fought and smoked pot and carried a knife, but he also stayed in school, worked in a factory in the evenings and won a scholarship to Bowdoin College in Maine, and from there went on to earn a degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Bowdoin doesn't have many black alumni, and so when a promising black high-school senior is applying to the college from New York, the admissions office often sends the student to Canada for an alumni interview. When I arrived at his office, Canada was firing questions at Julian, a 17-year-old from Brooklyn who attends a magnet school. Canada made notes on a clipboard as Julian talked, answered a few of his questions about Bowdoin and Maine and then shook his hand and showed him out.

"He's a good kid, and I think he'll be terrific at Bowdoin," Canada said as he sat back down. "But he's not my kid. " Not a Harlem Children's Zone kid, he meant. "He comes from a family, they've got it together, his parents are both educators. That's not us. We want those other kids, the ones who don't have two parents, whose parents haven't gone to college, who haven't got a chance statistically of making it. "

This distinction -- between children who are "his kids" and children who aren't -- is one that Canada draws all the time, and it goes back a long way in his own personal history. In "Fist Stick Knife Gun," published in 1995, he describes a summer night when he was 14. He and half a dozen friends were sitting on someone's stoop drinking Rheingold when a car came screeching

up and a man they didn't know got out and challenged one of them to a fight. The fight started, and at first it went according to the rules of Union Avenue, meaning no weapons and no one else gets involved. But then the stranger pulled out a gun, which was almost unheard of in 1966. Canada was ready to run, but instead he and his friends slowly converged on the older, bigger, better-armed man and scared him off the block through the strength of their numbers. What he learned that day, he wrote, was that he and his friends "loved one another enough to be willing to die. "

When Canada talks about "my kids" now, he means the 6,500 children who live in the Harlem Children's Zone. But even more than that, he means the least successful children in the neighborhood. When he talks about them, it feels personal, as if his real objective is to work with children just like the cold, tough, frustrated boys he grew up with on Union Avenue, most of whom are now dead or in prison -- to make amends for the past by saving Harlem's children today.

Still, Canada's approach to poverty is not sentimental. When he considers any given poor family living in the Harlem Children's Zone, he divides their problems up in his mind into the ones he needs to solve and the ones he doesn't need to solve. The ones he needs to solve are the ones that are keeping the child from succeeding in school. Everything else, he has decided, he can leave alone. "Do we think that it would be better for our parents to be married?" he said, tilting back in his chair. "Absolutely. Why? Because two-parent families have more income. Children tend to do better when they have two parents in the house. " In fact, he knows that the great majority of births in Harlem are to single mothers and that most of the parents whose children he serves are unmarried. "But what ability do we have to make an impact on that?" he asked. "None. Right? If we tried to do that, we'd spend all our time just doing that. "

Canada admitted that he is engaged in a kind of triage. He described for me an imaginary Harlem parent. "You can be 20 years old, with a job that doesn't pay you enough money to survive on," he said. "You're underemployed. You've got a kid. The kid's not doing well in school. You've got no place for the kid to be after school. Well, we'll provide services for that child. But we're not going to solve the problem of you being underemployed. That's not going to go away. "

He is, in other words, sidestepping the macroeconomic solutions that some advocates insist are the only way to solve the problem of poverty -- better wages, a national jobs program, a bigger earned-income tax credit -- in favor of programs that in one way or another directly affect the performance of the neighborhood's poor children.

Canada's educational philosophy emphasizes accountability and testing, and in that way it is similar to the dominant idea in public education today. The doctrine of accountability -- the idea that if students do poorly on standardized tests, schools should lose their financing and teachers should lose their jobs -- first emerged in the late 80's and early 90's in the Houston public schools. It then moved to the White House as the basis of the No Child Left Behind law when Rod Paige, the superintendent of the Houston schools, became the education secretary under George W. Bush. In the past year, though, news reports and lawsuits have revealed that when schools are compelled to meet certain numbers -- graduation rates, standardized-test scores --

their administrators often succumb to the urge to cheat. In Houston and New York, principals have shoved troubled students out of school, often under an administrative sleight of hand, in order to keep their schools' numbers artificially high. Canada has set the same rigorous goals for his own organization, but for him, the urge is the opposite: not to push the worst kids aside, but to recruit them even harder.

On this afternoon, Canada was worried about a set of internal statistics he had just uncovered: some of his students seemed to be doing too well. Last fall, his organization started a new program in four Harlem public schools called the Fifth Grade Institute, an after-school program for 160 fifth-grade students designed to begin catching them up to grade level before the charter school opens in September. Canada wanted to calculate how much the program was improving the reading ability of these students, so he asked to see their scores on the previous year's citywide fourth-grade reading test for comparison. Reading scores in New York City public schools are delivered in four categories, the higher the better. A 4 means the child is reading above grade level; a 3 means the child is reading at grade level; a 2 means below grade level; and a 1 means significantly below grade level. In most of the city, 2's and 3's predominate, with some 4's thrown in. In schools in Harlem, though, about three-quarters of the students score either a 1 or a 2; there are a few 3's, and 4's are rare.

But when Canada looked at the scores for the children in the Fifth Grade Institute, he found a lot of 3's -- more than a random sampling of Harlem students would have drawn. And on the day I visited, he was worried that the process of recruiting students for the Fifth Grade Institute had somehow been selective. He was sure it wasn't conscious on the part of his administrators, and, in fact, when he later received more detailed scores, they seemed more in line with the neighborhood patterns. Still, it was only natural, he knew, that parents who would bother to sign their children up for an ambitious after-school program would tend to be the better-organized, better-educated ones, and so it wouldn't be surprising if their children were better readers. Maybe his kids, the 1's and 2's, hadn't heard about the program, or maybe their parents hadn't managed to get it together in time to sign them up.

So what do you do? If you offer a new program, the best students will naturally enroll first, but you want the worst students. How do you get those parents to apply? Sometimes, in Canada's experience, it happens by accident. In 2001, the first year the Harlem Children's Zone offered Harlem Gems, its Head Start-like program for 4-year-olds, the organizers were behind schedule and didn't manage to send out fliers and start recruiting until August, just a few weeks before the program began. All the well-organized parents had already made their child-care plans for the year, and the last-minute, overburdened parents were the ones who signed up. That gave Canada the demographic he wanted, and he was able to get concrete results. When the 4-year-olds started Harlem Gems in 2001, 53 percent were scoring "delayed" or "very delayed" on the Bracken Basic Concept Scale for school readiness. At the end of the yearlong program, 26 percent were delayed.

In that case, the search for the most delayed kids worked because the organizers got lucky. Usually, though, it involves a lot of knocking on doors. I went out one morning with two outreach workers, Francesca Silfa and Mark Frazier, as they searched through central Harlem for new parents to enroll in Baby College. They knocked on the door of every apartment in a 21-

story building on 118th Street, looking for parents with children under 4, leaving fliers under the doors if no one answered. They didn't meet with any resistance or hostility, although they did get a few skeptical looks. Mostly the process seemed slow and painstaking. Whenever they ran into Baby College graduates in the halls, they stopped to chat, prodding them for suggestions of good candidates in the building or elsewhere on the block. In addition to the door-to-door approach, recruiters visit laundromats, supermarkets and check-cashing outlets to look for new mothers. On the day I was with them, Silfa approached one woman pushing a stroller down 118th Street and managed to sign her and her daughter up on the spot.

For most parents, the attractions of a program like Baby College are obvious: useful information, the relief of spending Saturday morning getting to know other mothers instead of being stuck in a cramped apartment and free child care during class time. But if those aren't enough of a pull, there are raffles at the end of each class for \$50 Old Navy gift certificates and a big drawing at the end of the course in which one parent wins a month's rent.

This combination of door-knocking, cajoling and offering incentives seems to work, and each nine-week session of Baby College draws a class of more than 100 parents, all of whom receive weekly follow-up visits at home. More than 95 percent of the parents -- 677 so far -- have successfully completed the course. The real test of this approach, Canada said when we spoke in February, will come when the Promise Academy opens its doors. By law, the charter school will be open to students from anywhere in the city's five boroughs, which means a lottery to choose the incoming classes from a broader pool of applicants. But the only students Canada really wants in his school are the ones from central Harlem, and especially the lowest-performing ones, exactly those whose parents, he said, are least inclined to apply to send their children to a special school.

"I will make sure that every single poor-performing school and parent in Harlem knows about this program," Canada said back in February. "And if we don't get more 1's and 2's than 3's, then we haven't done our job properly. " What that will require, Canada said, is persistent recruiting. "We're going to have to go and force some of these parents to come and fill out the application," he said. Even once he finds the 1's and 2's, he added, "their parents may say no, which means we have to go back and figure out a way to bribe them and get them to say yes. And I hate to put it like that, but that's what we'll end up doing. We'll end up saying, 'If you get your kid to apply, you'll get free movie passes. '"

The point of all of this intensive recruiting is to amass evidence -- indisputable data that show exactly what it will take to level the playing field and get poor children performing on the same level as the city's middle-class children. "If we just end up saving a bunch of kids in Harlem, that will be good for them, but it won't mean an awful lot to me in the long run," Canada said. "We want to be able to say that thousands of poor children can learn at high levels and perform at rates that are the same as middle-class children if they are given the opportunity to do so. But I want to be clear when I say we've got an answer that we really have an answer. "

The answer that Canada wants to provide is in fact very much in demand. There are plenty of examples of programs that didn't work: in 2000, for example, the Heinz Endowments abandoned as a failure a \$59 million, five-year program to provide early-childhood care and education for

7,600 low-income children in and around Pittsburgh. The program's costs soared, and four years in, when Heinz pulled the plug, only 680 children were being served. What is most startling about the current study of poverty is how little conclusive evidence there is about which cures do work. There are no more than a dozen studies in the field that track how successful various interventions are over the long term, and the evidence from those studies tends to be spotty and subject to debate.

To William Julius Wilson, the Harvard sociologist who is one of the country's leading thinkers on urban poverty, this is precisely the significance of the Harlem Children's Zone. "It is very, very important for policy makers to be able to cite examples of how you can improve the life chances of disadvantaged kids," he said. "There are so many people who feel that whatever you do, it's not going to work. They want to say, 'Well, there's just a culture of poverty out there, and you can't really change it. '" If Canada's project is successful, though, Wilson said, it will "provide the ammunition to policy makers who want to do something to address the problems of poverty. " It will allow them to say: "Here are kids who would ordinarily end up as permanent economic proletarians, and here is a program that has been able to overcome the cumulative disadvantages of chronic subordination. So why not commit ourselves across the nation to try to duplicate what he's done?"

Canada has a vivid picture in his mind of a judgment day to come -- 8, 10, 12 years down the road. Children who are now entering the system as infants will be taking their third-grade citywide math and reading tests, and they'll be scoring at or above grade level. Children who entered the system as Harlem Gems will be graduating from high school -- he expects that 90 percent of his students will graduate on time. It is only at that point, he explained, that he will be able to say to the rest of the country: "This isn't an abstract conversation anymore. If you want poor children to do as well as middle-class children" -- not necessarily to be superachievers but to become what he calls "typical Americans," able to compete for jobs -- "we now know how to do it. " If he's right, the services he will provide will cost about \$1,400 a year per student, on top of existing public-school funds. The country will finally know, he said, what the real price tag is for poor children to succeed.

Canada first came up with the idea for the Harlem Children's Zone in the mid-90's, but it wasn't until a few years later that he was ready to propose it officially to the board of the Rheedlen Centers (as the organization was then known). Crime had dropped sharply in Harlem, as it had everywhere in New York City, and Canada was no longer overwhelmed by the daily anxiety of trying to prevent the children in his programs from being killed. The national economy was booming, housing prices in the neighborhood were climbing and the first signs of gentrification were appearing, but for children in Harlem, the situation hadn't improved much. The unemployment rate there was still very high. (Even now, after the arrival of new middle-class residents, it stands at 18. 5 percent. ) It was in this context that Canada went before the Rheedlen board in 1998 and said that he wanted to remake the organization completely, to set up a kind of project that had never been tried before.

Canada had recently brought on a new board member, a fellow Bowdoin alumnus named Stan Druckenmiller, who, while running George Soros's Quantum Fund, became one of the most

successful hedge-fund managers in the history of the stock market, amassing a personal fortune estimated at more than \$1 billion. After Canada laid out his proposal to the board, Druckenmiller took him aside and told him that in his opinion he had the right plan but the wrong board. Canada agreed, and the two men politely deposed the chairman and replaced him with Druckenmiller, who set about raising money and recruiting new board members from the higher echelons of Wall Street.

The organization now has a lot more money than it did a few years ago. Druckenmiller paid for about a third of the cost of the new headquarters himself, and board members contribute about a third of the annual operating budget. (The rest comes from foundations, the government and private donors. ) In April, the organization held a glittering fund-raising dinner at Cipriani 42nd Street, a cavernous former bank building converted into a restaurant, and raised \$2. 8 million in a single night, mostly from bankers and stockbrokers. (The 2003 fund-raiser, by comparison, pulled in \$1. 5 million. )

Financiers and C. E. O. 's are drawn to the Harlem Children's Zone not just because of its mission but also because of the way it is run. In fact, the relationship the organization has with its donors is as unusual, arguably, as the program itself. In the late 90's, Allen Grossman, then the president of Outward Bound U. S. A. and now a management professor at the Harvard Business School, began studying the nonprofit sector from a business perspective. It was a mess, he concluded: in an article in The Harvard Business Review in 1997, he described a hopelessly dysfunctional relationship between foundations and nonprofit organizations, in which foundations made short-term grants to pet projects, nonprofits spent all their time chasing money and each side had a vested interest in maintaining the reassuring fiction that failing programs were actually succeeding. Grossman proposed that philanthropists start thinking more like venture capitalists: searching out nonprofits with innovative long-term ideas, financing them early, insisting on transparency and frequent evaluation and nurturing them along the way with expert advice and continuing infusions of capital.

One of the first foundations to take Grossman's ideas seriously was the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, which had been financing Rheedlen for years. In 1999, Nancy Roob, the foundation's grant manager, approached Canada and offered him \$250,000, plus the dedicated services of a new management consultancy for nonprofits called the Bridgespan Group, to write a new business plan. This was unheard of: when philanthropists give away a quarter of a million dollars, they generally want the money to go directly to poor people, with as little overhead as possible. Clark, by contrast, was inviting Canada to spend the foundation's money -- first the \$250,000, and eventually another \$1 million -- entirely on overhead: on developing the business plan; creating a new, more hierarchical management structure; buying new technology for an internal communication system; and constructing a rigorous and continuing process of self-evaluation.

The business plan that Canada's team came up with proposed a steady increase in the annual budget over nine years, from \$6 million to \$10 million to \$46 million. (This year, four years in, it is \$24 million. ) The plan reads more like a corporate strategy document than a charity prospectus. It refers to "market-penetration targets" and "new information technology applications," including a "performance-tracking system. " In practice, too, the organization feels

more like a business than a nonprofit, which offers comforting visuals to donors: everyone at the headquarters wears a suit, every meeting starts on time and there is a constant flow of evaluations, reports and budgets. "Geoff could be a C. E. O. at any S. &P. 500 company," Druckenmiller said, and he meant it as a compliment.

During the months I spent visiting Canada, the issue of education took up more and more of his time and attention. When we first spoke, almost a year ago, he described all of the organization's programs -- an initiative to combat asthma, an organizing campaign for tenants -- as equally important. But as the months wore on, it seemed, all he could think about were the problems in the schools. He was pouring more and more resources into Harlem's public schools, paying for in-class tutors and after-school reading programs, and scores had barely budged. He was beginning to see it as a systemic problem, he said, something that couldn't be solved by the kind of supplementary services he was offering. "We've got to really do something radically different if we're going to save these kids," he told me in the fall. "If we keep fooling around on the fringes, I know 10 years will go by, and instead of 75 percent of the kids in Harlem scoring below grade level on their reading scores, maybe it will be 70 percent, or maybe it will be 65 percent. People will say, 'Oh, we're making progress. ' But that to me is not progress. This is much more urgent than that. "

So at the same time that he has been working inside the school system with a greater intensity than before, he has also begun to try to opt out of it, by establishing charter schools. Beginning in September, the Harlem Children's Zone plans to start educating its own students at two locations. The Promise Academy, which will eventually be a kindergarten-through-12th-grade charter school, will start with a kindergarten and sixth-grade class in September. The sixth grade will be housed in the organization's new headquarters on 125th Street; the kindergarten is expected to open inside an existing public school. The academy will expand over the course of seven years into a school of 1,300 students. The curriculum will be intense: classes will run from 8 a. m. to 4 p. m. , five days a week -- an hour and a half longer than regular city schools. After-school programs will run until 6 p. m. , and the school year will continue well into July.

Although charter schools are regulated by the state, and are outside the city's control, Joel I. Klein, the city's schools chancellor, has supported Canada's charter-school efforts. Canada said he sees Bloomberg and Klein as his allies, which is a strange feeling, he said, because for so long he felt as if he were at war with the school system. Soon after Klein was appointed, in the fall of 2002, he called Canada and set up a meeting. Canada said that the proposals Klein laid out for the entire school system -- greater accountability, more charter schools, more involvement for outside groups -- were exactly what Canada had been waiting to hear. In the summer of 2003, Klein appointed Lucille Swarns to be the regional superintendent for Upper Manhattan, and when Canada met her, he was once again pleasantly surprised.

"When I first came here in the early 1980's," Canada said, "we felt that District 3" -- which stretches from the Upper West Side into central Harlem -- "ran a system almost of apartheid, where below 96th Street, the schools were doing great, and the schools we cared about were doing lousy. " Even after his organization began spending a million dollars a year in the district's schools, he said, he never once got a call from the district superintendent. With Swarns things were different right away.

The most surprising aspect of the new collaboration between Klein and Canada is that the chancellor is encouraging the Harlem Children's Zone's plans to convert existing public schools in Harlem into charter schools. Canada has received conditional approval from Klein to start a slowly expanding charter school, beginning this fall with the Promise Academy's kindergarten class. As those children move through the school, the organization will take over control of an additional grade each year, sharing the building with the public school while gradually supplanting it. In six years, Canada explained, "we're going to put the existing school out of business" -- and he said he hopes that that school is only the beginning.

All of which makes skeptics, especially those in the teachers' union, wonder about Canada's motivation. Randi Weingarten, the president of the United Federation of Teachers, said that she used to be friendly with Canada, even attending his fund-raisers, until Bloomberg and Klein came into office and started making threatening noises toward her union. "Since the mayor became mayor, Geoff Canada has stopped having any relationship with us," she said.

In her opinion, Canada's new attitude comes down to politics: "I think what's happened is that they've decided that they'll work with the mayor, and that they won't work with the public-school system except through the mayor and the chancellor" -- meaning that they won't work with the teachers' union. Canada often speaks of the opposition that his charter-school plan is going to face from the teachers' union and what he calls the educational establishment, but to Weingarten, it's the other way around: it's Canada who is picking this fight, demonizing the teachers' union in order to score political points with the mayor. "They are working very secretly with the Board of Education and the Bloomberg administration" on the charter-school plan, she said, a strategy that she said was shortsighted, not least because it is far from certain that Bloomberg will be re-elected. "If you truly want schools to succeed," she said, "you work with the people who represent the teachers."

The battle between the teachers' union and City Hall has been going on for decades, but it has reached an unusually high pitch under Bloomberg. Canada clearly feels a genuine ideological kinship with the mayor, and with Klein, but there's also an immediate advantage to his alliance with them: his charter schools will use nonunion teachers; they will be paid more than public-school teachers, he said, but they will also work longer days, and for 12 months a year. Canada also wanted a free hand to fire teachers who weren't performing up to his expectations -- authority Canada said he felt sure the union would not give him. At his new school, he will have it.

In the days and weeks leading up to the charter-school lottery, the organization's outreach workers did exactly what Geoffrey Canada said they would do: they went door-to-door in housing projects, they tracked down recalcitrant mothers and fathers, they solicited applications from the parents of children in every one of their programs. And by the evening of the lottery, a rainy Tuesday in April, they had received 359 applications for just 180 slots -- 90 in the kindergarten class and 90 in the sixth grade. Legally, they could have held the lottery behind closed doors and simply mailed out acceptance letters, but Canada wanted it to be a real event, so he arranged to hold the lottery in public, in the auditorium of P. S. 242 on West 122nd Street.

By the time the lottery began, the place was packed. Every seat was filled with a hopeful parent or a prospective student or a patient sibling, and late arrivals were standing in the aisles or cramming themselves into the back of the room. Multicolored helium balloons were tied to the end of each row of seats, which gave the room a festive air, but more than anything the place felt nervous.

Canada took the stage. On a long table next to him, a gold drum held a jumble of index cards, each one printed with the name of a child. "We are calling our school Promise Academy because we are making a promise to all of our parents," Canada said from behind a lectern. "If your child is in our school, we will guarantee that child succeeds. There will be no excuses. We're not going to say, 'The child failed because they came from a home with only one parent. ' We're not going to say, 'The child failed because they're new immigrants into the country. ' If your child gets into our school, that child is going to succeed. If you work with us as parents, we are going to do everything -- and I mean everything -- to see that your child gets a good education. "

And then the drawing began, starting with the kindergarten class. Doreen Land, the charter schools' newly hired superintendent, read the first name into a microphone: "Dijon Brinnard. " A whoop went up from the back of the auditorium, and a jubilant mother started edging her way out of her row, proudly clutching the hand of her 4-year-old son. Land smiled and took the next card: "Kasim-Seann Cisse. " Another whoop, some applause and then another name.

At the front of the auditorium, Canada greeted each mother (or, occasionally, father) and child. Proud parents shook his hand and introduced their children, beaming on their way back to their seats. In the second row, a woman in her 40's, wearing an "I Love New York" T-shirt and a red nylon jacket, sat with her head bowed and her eyes shut tight, her lips moving in an anxious prayer. And then Land called the name "Jaylene Fonseca," and the woman's eyes flew open. She made her way to the front, shook Canada's hand and then told me that her name was Wilma Jure and that Jaylene was her niece, a 4-year-old already enrolled in Harlem Gems. As her eyes filled with tears, she explained that Jaylene's mother, Jure's sister, was living in the city's shelter system for homeless families. Most nights, Jaylene slept with her mother in a shelter on 41st Street, then spent the day in Harlem Gems. "It's an amazing program for people like us who really don't have the means to send our kids to get such a good education," Jure said. "I mean, she's learning French," she added, a little incredulous. Now Jaylene was guaranteed a spot in the Promise Academy from kindergarten through the end of high school. It was hard not to feel that her life had just changed for the better, with the draw of a card.

As the evening wore on, though, the mood in the auditorium started to shift. The kindergarten lottery ended, the chosen students trooped out to the cafeteria for a group photo and the sixth-grade lottery began. In the front row, Virainia Utley sat with her daughter Janiqua, listening to the names being called. Utley is something of a model parent in the Harlem Children's Zone. Janiqua is in the Fifth Grade Institute at P. S. 242, and her three younger siblings -- Jaquan, Janisha and John -- are all enrolled in the computer-assisted after-school reading program. Utley is the vice president of her tenants' association, which was organized by Community Pride, the community-organizing division, and she is a regular presence at Zone events. When I first met her, months earlier, she was already talking about Janiqua going to the Promise Academy. But now the lottery numbers were rising -- 54, 55, 56 -- and her name hadn't yet been called.

After Land read out the 90th name, Canada took the stage again and explained to the remaining parents that it wasn't likely that there would be room for their children in the sixth grade. Land would read out the rest of the names and put them on a waiting list, he said, but this part wouldn't be much fun. He encouraged everyone to go home. Land went back to reading names, and Utley and Janiqua sat and listened, still in their seats, as the waiting list grew and the number of cards in the drum dwindled. By the time Land got to the 80th place on the waiting list, Utley told me, she and Janiqua were just waiting to make sure her name was called. Maybe her card got lost, she said, or stuck to another card. The room was thinning out, and the only remaining parents were angry ones. One by one they were letting Canada know how they felt. A line of parents came up to him to find out what could be done to get their children into the school, and he had to tell each one the same thing: nothing could be done. One woman, who was too angry to give me her name, spat out her complaint. "It's not fair," she shouted. "And I don't like it." Why drag everyone out on a rainy night, she wanted to know, just to sit in a public-school auditorium and feel like losers?

Finally, at No. 111 on the waiting list, Janiqua Utley's name was called, and her mother rose, took her by the hand and started up the aisle to the backdoor. As workers began sweeping up coffee cups and popped balloons, I sat down next to Canada. He looked exhausted, overwhelmed not only by the evening but also by the enormity of the task ahead of him. His eyes were watery, and as we talked, he dabbed periodically at his nose with his folded-up handkerchief. "I was trying to get folks to leave and not to hang around to be the last kid called," he said. "This is very hard for me to see. It's very, very sad. These parents feel, Well, there go my child's chances. "

It was a waiting list, I reminded him, that had started him on the path toward the Harlem Children's Zone more than a decade ago -- and now, despite all the millions of dollars, and the staff of 650 and the backing of the mayor, he is still setting up waiting lists. He nodded. "We've got to do more," he said. "We've got to do better. " He sighed and looked up at the stage, where Land had just reached No. 150.

Paul Tough is an editor at The New York Times Magazine.

**Exhibit B**

Int. Cl.: 41

Prior U.S. Cls.: 100, 101, and 107

**United States Patent and Trademark Office**

Reg. No. 2,798,777  
Registered Dec. 23, 2003

**SERVICE MARK  
PRINCIPAL REGISTER**

**HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE**

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC. (NEW  
YORK NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)  
2770 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10025

FIRST USE 4-30-2002; IN COMMERCE 4-30-2002.

NO CLAIM IS MADE TO THE EXCLUSIVE  
RIGHT TO USE "HARLEM CHILDREN'S", APART  
FROM THE MARK AS SHOWN.

SN 76-395,659, FILED 4-15-2002.

GWEN STOKOLS, EXAMINING ATTORNEY

Int. Cl: 41

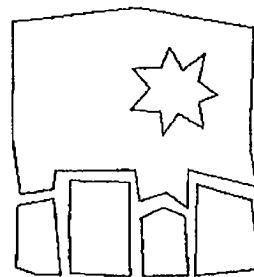
Prior U.S. Cls.: 100, 101, and 107

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Reg. No. 2,801,069

Registered Dec. 30, 2003

SERVICE MARK  
PRINCIPAL REGISTER



HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC. (NEW  
YORK NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)  
2770 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10025

FOR: SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS, NAMELY,  
EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES  
IN THE NATURE OF CLASSES, SEMINARS, WORK-  
SHOPS, AND PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS  
ACTIVITIES, TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF

LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NEW  
YORK CITY'S POVERTY-STRICKEN NEIGHBOR-  
HOODS, IN CLASS 41 (U.S. CLS. 100, 101 AND 107).

FIRST USE 4-30-2002; IN COMMERCE 4-30-2002.

SN 76-395,644, FILED 4-15-2002.

GWEN STOKOLS, EXAMINING ATTORNEY

Int. Cl. 41

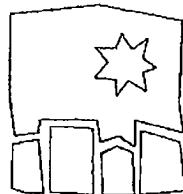
Prior U.S. Cls.: 100, 101, and 107

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Reg. No. 2,801,068

Registered Dec. 30, 2003

SERVICE MARK  
PRINCIPAL REGISTER



Harlem Children's  
**Z O N E**

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ACTIVITIES, TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF  
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FIRST USE 4-30-2002; IN COMMERCE 4-30-2002.

NO CLAIM IS MADE TO THE EXCLUSIVE  
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FROM THE MARK AS SHOWN.

SN 76-395,643, FILED 4-15-2002.

GWEN STOKOLS, EXAMINING ATTORNEY

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Prior U.S. Cls.: 100, 101, and 107

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Reg. No. 3,248,239  
Registered May 29, 2007

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PRINCIPAL REGISTER

CHILDREN'S ZONE

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE (NEW YORK  
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35 EAST 125TH STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10035

FOR: SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS, NAMELY,  
EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES  
IN THE NATURE OF CLASSES, SEMINARS, WORK-  
SHOPS, AND PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS  
ACTIVITIES, TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF  
LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NEW  
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Int. Cls.: 41, 43 and 44

Prior U.S. Cls.: 100, 101 and 107

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Reg. No. 3,301,992  
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HCZ

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE (NEW YORK  
NON-PROFIT CORPORATION)  
35 EAST 125TH STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10035

FOR: PROVIDING COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NEW YORK CITY'S POVERTY-STRICKEN NEIGHBORHOODS, NAMELY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN THE NATURE OF STANDARDIZED TEST PREPARATION, TUTORING, HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE, MENTORING IN THE FIELD OF ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH, AND SENIOR HIGH SUBJECT MATTERS, AND COMPUTER CLASSES; ORGANIZING RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, NAMELY, AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS, ARTS AND CRAFTS ACTIVITIES, FITNESS PROGRAMS, MARTIAL ARTS, AEROBICS, DANCE, POP-CULTURE DISCUSSIONS, AND OPEN MICROPHONE NIGHTS, IN CLASS 41 (U.S. CLS. 100, 101 AND 107).

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HOODS, NAMELY PROVIDING TEMPORARY HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS AND ARRANGING TEMPORARY HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS, IN CLASS 43 (U.S. CLS. 100 AND 101).

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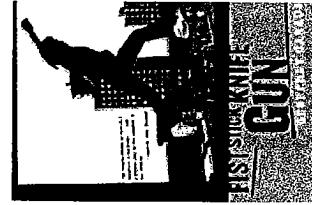
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links below:

Beacon Press

Amazon.com

Booksense.com  
(Independent  
bookstores)

#### Recent News & Highlights

\*New! HCZ 2006-2007 Biannual Report

\*New York Times on Promise Academy science teacher going to Antarctica [click for article]

\*Austin College honors HCZ President/CEO Geoffrey Canada [click here for details]

\* Geoffrey Canada discusses education on The Charlie Rose Show - Jan. 2, 2008 [click for link]

\* Report on HCZ accomplishments for FY 2007  
\* President Bill Clinton discusses HCZ on The David Letterman Show [Windows Media Player]

\* HCZ President/CEO Geoffrey Canada on the show 60 Minutes, discussing "No Snitching" culture and rap music. [Link to online re-broadcast]  
\* Volunteer Spotlight

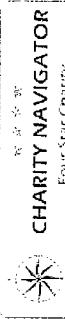
\* Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall visit HCZ - Jan. 28th, 2007 [view NY Daily News] [view NY Times]  
[view Associated Press]

The Team HCZ Newsletter

\* Fall 2007  
\* Spring 2007

#### Harlem Children's Zone®

Founded in 1970, Harlem Children's Zone, Inc. is a pioneering, non-profit, community-based organization that works to enhance the quality of life for children and families in some of New York City's most devastated neighborhoods. Formerly known as Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, HCZ, Inc.'s 15 centers serve more than 13,000 children and adults, including over 10,000 at-risk children. The emphasis of The Children's Zone work is not just on education, social service and recreation, but on rebuilding the very fabric of community life.



**Harlem Children's Zone is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.**

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## Children's Zone: HCZ Project & Programs

### The Mission

#### The Mission

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#### Goals

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HCZ Sites

The Harlem Children's Zone Project is a multi-year comprehensive community building initiative of the Harlem Children's Zone. The HCZ Project's mission is to create significant positive opportunities for all children living in a 100-block area of Central Harlem by helping parents, residents, teachers and other stakeholders create a safe learning environment for youth. We aim to improve outcomes for poor children and families in devastated communities, starting in Central Harlem.

Behind this mission lie two main tenets: First, children from troubled communities are far more likely to grow to healthy, satisfying adulthood (and to help build a better community) if a critical mass of the adults around them are well versed in the techniques of effective parenting, and are engaged in local educational, social, and religious activities with their children.

Second, the earlier a child is touched by sound health care, intellectual and social stimulation, and consistent guidance from loving, attentive adults, the more likely that child will be to grow into a responsible and fulfilled member of the community. Intervention at later stages is still important — and must be adjusted as the person progresses through the various stages of youth. But later intervention is more costly and less sure of success. Families will need these later efforts to a lesser degree and in declining amounts if the earliest intervention is effective.

These twin principles — a critical mass of engaged, effective families, and early and progressive intervention in children's development — are crucial to the mission of the Harlem Children's Zone. Our focus over the next several years will be taking the Harlem Children's Zone to its logical fulfillment — extending the Zone and reaching a greater percentage of residents in the Zone with a wider, more effective mix of services, particularly at earlier ages.

Thus, what began as a strategic plan in July 1997, has evolved into a resident-driven community-building initiative that serves over 8,600 children annually. The work over the past several years has reaffirmed our belief that in order to create positive opportunities and outcomes for all of the children who live in the Harlem Children's Zone Project, we must continue to develop an integrated network of services and support that provides: family stability; opportunities for employment; decent and affordable housing; a quality education; and youth development activities for adolescents.

### HCZ Business Plan

This Executive Summary provided a brief overview of the Harlem Children's Zone Project strategy and recent progress. For a more detailed look at our plans for future expansion, please review our Business Plan:

- [Business Plan PDF format \(58 pages\)](#)

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**Harlem Children's Zone**

## HCZ Project & Programs

**The Mission**

**Goals**

The agency had a series of meeting with residents of the community to determine what their needs were. This community visioning process produced seven goals for the Harlem Children's Zone Project.

**Accomplishments**

- Support families in caring for their children
  - Improve academic outcomes for children
  - Stabilize city-owned housing & small private home ownership
  - Improve the physical environment
  - Increase resident leadership and involvement in the community
  - Support positive youth development
  - Increase the use and availability of technology

New in the HCZ Project  
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## HCZ Project & Programs

### The Boundaries of the Zone

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The work of the Harlem Children's Zone Project initially focused on a 24-block area in Central Harlem, from 116th Street to 123rd Street and from Fifth to Eighth Avenue. In 2004, the Zone expanded to 60 blocks, extending northward to 132nd Street and eastward to Madison Avenue. In 2007, the Zone expanded north to 143rd Street.

HCZ did a survey of the initial 24-block area and found that it had a population of about 13,000 people, with 86% African-American and 12% Latino. There were approximately 3,000 children between the ages of zero and 18 in the original Zone with 61% of those children living in poverty. The unemployment rate was 19% and 41% of residents were below the poverty level.

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## HCZ Project & Programs

### New in the HCZ Project

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The Harlem Children's Zone Project continues to expand its services for children and families. SMART is now available at selected public schools and HCZ program sites and we continue to collaborate on the Asthma Initiative.

#### Young Harlem Investors Program

HCZ's **Young Harlem Investors Program** encourages poor working families to begin saving for their children's college education while they are still in pre-school. HCZ runs the program in partnership with the SEED (Saving for Entrepreneurship, Education, and Downpayment) program of the not-for-profit CFED and Carver Bank. HCZ's program is open to 75 children and is currently at capacity. For each participating child, the family creates a savings account for entrepreneurship, home ownership or their child's college education. HCZ and CFED match the family's contributions and contribute when the families reach certain milestones. Additionally, parents participate in financial-education workshops. After four years, the accounts can be turned into 529 college savings accounts.

Read more about the Young Harlem Investors Program [here](#).

To see New York Daily News story on HCZ's SEED program, [click here](#).

#### SMART (Shaping Minds Around Reading and Technology)

SMART uses trained staff and literacy software programs to offer students individualized comprehensive support during in school and after school hours reinforcing the school day learning. While we recognize that computers will never replace good teaching & a well-rounded curriculum, Harlem Children's Zone uses the most effective technology available to support children in mastering the complexities of reading fundamentals

#### Asthma Initiative

Harlem Hospital's Department of Pediatrics, Columbia University's Harlem Health Promotion Center, Touchpoints, New York City Department of Health, and the Harlem Children's Zone have joined to launch the Harlem Children's Zone Asthma Initiative. HCZ Project programs such as Peacemakers, Harlem Gems and Baby College, are working with Harlem Hospital staff throughout the year to screen all Harlem Children's Zone Project children between the ages of 0-12 for asthma.

Initial screening results indicate that almost one-third of children in the HCZ Project have asthma. In contrast, the national rate is about 5-7 percent.

To address this health crisis among children, the HCZ Asthma Initiative has designed a holistic response. Community workers from Harlem Hospital have begun comprehensive home visits to conduct individual assessments and provide services to families with asthma. The home visit will include an assessment of the adequacy of existing primary care and

asthma medication (in collaboration with clinical staff), and provision of a full range of environmental, social, educational and medical interventions when indicated. The HCZ Asthma Initiative seeks to improve day-to-day health, reduce school absenteeism, Emergency Room visits and asthma related hospitalizations. [For an in-depth look at this program, click here]

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## HCZ Project & Programs

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Over the next six years, the Harlem Children's Zone plans to expand the geographic boundaries of the Harlem Children's Zone Project to reach more children and families. We have developed a growth plan that breaks our expansion into three manageable phases:

#### **Phase 1: FY 2000-FY 2003**

During Phase 1, Harlem Children's Zone focused on its work in the original HCZ Project boundaries, strengthened its management capacity, developed internal evaluation capacity, launched Harlem Gems and shared our knowledge with interested community based organizations, governments, foundations and others. Phase 1 began in fiscal year 2000 (HCZ's fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th) and continued through FY 2003.

#### **Phase 2: FY 2004-FY 2006**

During Phase 2, the Harlem Children's Zone Project is expanded its boundaries northward to 132nd Street and further east to Madison Avenue. To anchor this expansion, the Harlem Children's Zone opened a new headquarters building on 125th Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues. Inside this building, the Harlem Children's Zone launched the Promise Academy Charter School (the elementary school component is at PS 275), the Harlem Children's Zone Community Center and the Practitioners Institute, where we can share our knowledge about community building. The building also houses administrative offices for the President/CEO and his staff.

#### **Phase 3: FY 2007-FY 2011**

In Phase 3, Harlem Children's Zone will expand the Harlem Children's Zone Project north again to 143rd Street. This expansion will enable the Harlem Children's Zone to serve over 10,000 children annually.

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## HCZ Project & Programs

### HCZ Sites

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- Harlem Gems
- Harlem Peacemakers
- The Renaissance University for Community Education (TRUCE)
- College Success Office
- Employment and Technology Center
- Family Support Center
- Community Pride
- HCZ Community Center

### The Baby College

The HCZ has forged relationships with several organizations and experts in the field including Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, the noted pediatrician and child development expert, to expand the work of our Baby College to reach all parents in the HCZ who are either expecting a child or raising one between the ages of 0 to 3 years. It is our goal to provide these residents with both a range of information and the supports necessary to raise happy and healthy children who enter school ready to learn. [Click here for an in-depth look at The Baby College]

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### The Three Year Old Journey

This program was strategically designed to work with parents who graduated from our Baby College program (and whose children have been accepted to our early enrollment lottery for and the HCZ Promise Academy Charter School) to provide them an intensive multi-month program to keep them engaged and prepare them for our pre-kindergarten programs. Workshops are designed to teach parents developmental theories and milestones, enhance parenting skills, and provide information on the knowledge and skills of pre-kindergarten students. The program focuses heavily on literacy. Workshops are run by HCZ staff, as well as experts in the field including a speech pathologist and Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and his staff the Brazelton Touchpoints Center. Also in keeping with The Baby College model, parents can bring their children to the program, who are then provided with small and large group activities focused on developing vital socio-emotional and motor skills in a 4:1 child to adult ratio setting.

### Harlem Gems

This Universal Pre-Kindergarten program located at PS 149/207 provides 40 four-year olds with an intellectually and socially stimulating curriculum that helps prepare them to enter Kindergarten ready to learn. Through licensed teachers and Peacemakers in each classroom, The Gems support children with a 4:1 child to adult ratio.

[Back to top](#)**Harlem Peacemakers**

HCZ's AmeriCorps funded program identifies and trains young people who are committed to making their neighborhoods safe places for children and families. Through its School Success Project, over 150 Peacemakers work directly in classrooms and operate after-school and summer programs at PS 76, PS 149, PS 154, PS 197, and PS 242, serving 1,200 elementary children in the HCZ. [Click here for an in-depth look at the Peacemakers program.]

[Back to top](#)**The Renaissance University for Community Education (TRUCE)**

This comprehensive youth development program for adolescents ages 12-19, fosters academic growth and career readiness with an emphasis on the arts and multi-media technology. The Real Deal, TRUCE's award winning video and literacy program, is a cable television program that features poetry, video dramas and documentaries. Harlem Overheard is the only youth produced newspaper in Harlem where young writers and entrepreneurs have an opportunity to develop their communication, leadership and marketing skills through its quarterly publication. The Insight Center, provides the needed academic support, college prep and multi-cultural exposure to prepare students for college and careers. The TRUCE Fitness and Nutrition Center, the first youth run fitness center in the nation, offers residents in the HCZ free access to fitness classes and equipment and nutrition information. [Click here for an in-depth look at TRUCE]

[Back to top](#)**College Success Office**

The HCZ College Success Office (CSO) mission is to guide students to become empowered self-advocates of their college education and future careers. The CSO provides year-round academic, personal and financial counseling as well as civic engagement opportunities to students, working on two primary levels:

For 2,000 high school students - provides college preparation and activities such as test preparation, one-on-one tutoring, workshops, guidance on the college application process and college trips through six of HCZ's youth development program sites. For 300 college students - offers college support services such as assistance with academic plans and study strategies, workshops, counseling, financial assistance, internships and other career readiness activities and guidance with post-graduate opportunities.

**Employment and Technology Center**

The Employment and Technology Center helps the community develop and strengthen their skills in technology, employment and academics. In this age of information technology, it is critical for both youth and adults to be computer-literate. At ETC, three programs integrate technology and academics: an after-school program for high school youth, a Saturday program for children ages 5-10, and computer classes for adults. Academic success is a priority for all of the youth classes; tutoring is required, and reading, writing and critical thinking are incorporated into the classes. The adult computer classes offer introductory-level classes in the major computer applications, such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. In addition, ETC's resource room is open to the community for job searching with access to the Internet, a fax machine and a photocopier.

[Back to top](#)**Family Support Center**

This walk-in store front facility provides families in crisis with immediate access to professional social services including foster care prevention, domestic violence workshops and parenting skills classes.

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### Community Pride

This resident driven, neighborhood revitalization program which began on W. 119th Street, has led to the creation of community coalitions and the transfer of city-owned buildings to resident management and ownership. Community Pride's block-by-block, building-by-building organizing strategy is being replicated throughout the Harlem Children's Zone.  
[Click here for an in-depth look at this program.]

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### HCZ Community Center

The HCZ Community Center is a year-round comprehensive program located at 35 East 125th Street. The program operates Monday-Saturday, from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. and noon - 4 p.m. on Sunday (program hours vary slightly during the summer). There are program activities for middle to high school students (ages 11 - 18) and adults. Activities include:

**Academic Enrichment:** Students are provided with a variety of academic supports, including homework assistance, one-on-one tutoring (facilitated by English Language Arts and Math Specialists), test preparation and integrated academic enrichment activities. For our high school students there is Regents prep, SAT prep, in addition to writing and math workshops. There are also computer-based reading and math programming and our Investment Club, which teaches about personal finance, for middle and high school students.

**Sports and Recreation:** Youth participate in safe, structured, supervised recreational activities, including competitive and non-competitive sports (Martial Arts, basketball, volleyball, double-dutch, table tennis, etc.) and games (board games, chess, puzzles, etc.). Activities will promote gross motor skills, coordination, strategic thinking, social skills, sportsmanship, and team building.

**Performing and Fine Arts:** As part of their cultural and artistic enrichment, students are engaged in a variety of fine and performing arts programs, including dance (African, Step, Tap and Hip Hop), music, poetry, arts and crafts, photography, theatre, and film & book review (Urban voices).

**Health and Wellness:** Students and adults are afforded an opportunity to participate in a variety of health and wellness activities - ranging from nutrition classes, healthy cooking, aerobics, health assessments, personal fitness planning, sports conditioning, yoga, individual counseling and our monthly Farmers Market.

**Rites of Passage:** Our "Prepared 4 Purpose" program offers our middle school students gender-specific activities leading to the exploration of values, relationships, self-esteem, goal setting, human sexuality, personal development, etc. Students are separated by gender and assigned to small groups.

**Project CHOICES (Considering How Options I Choose Effect Self):** Our high school students are provided the following services in this program component: counseling, family interventions, mental health referrals, benefits entitlement assistance, advocacy and expert presentations in areas most critical to the social and mental health of our adolescents. Students also can take job-readiness and career-goals workshops.

**Community Service:** Through our community service projects students will develop consistent and positive relationships with adults and peers and a sense of community. The projects will foster high expectations for participants, help them develop skills and creativity, support healthy behaviors and promote physical well-being.

The HCZ Community Center also provides a forum for the neighborhood, such as community meetings, health fairs, book fairs, parent forums and youth leadership initiatives.

This site houses the following:

- The HCZ Promise Academy Charter School providing the highest quality education for up to 600 middle and high school children. The school includes:
  - Peacemakers in every classroom;
  - A modern library with research facilities;
  - A state-of-the-art computer lab;
  - A science laboratory;
  - A gymnasium/all-purpose room; and
  - An auditorium/cafeteria.
- A medical clinic to provide families with free immunizations, physicals and health education;
- A Practitioners Institute to share our best practices with other communities;
- Administrative offices for the President/CEO and the administrative staff.

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Exhibit D

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Our mission is to improve learning for children living in Asylum Hill. We work directly in schools and collaborate with other organizations that also help empower parents to create a safe, healthy learning environment.

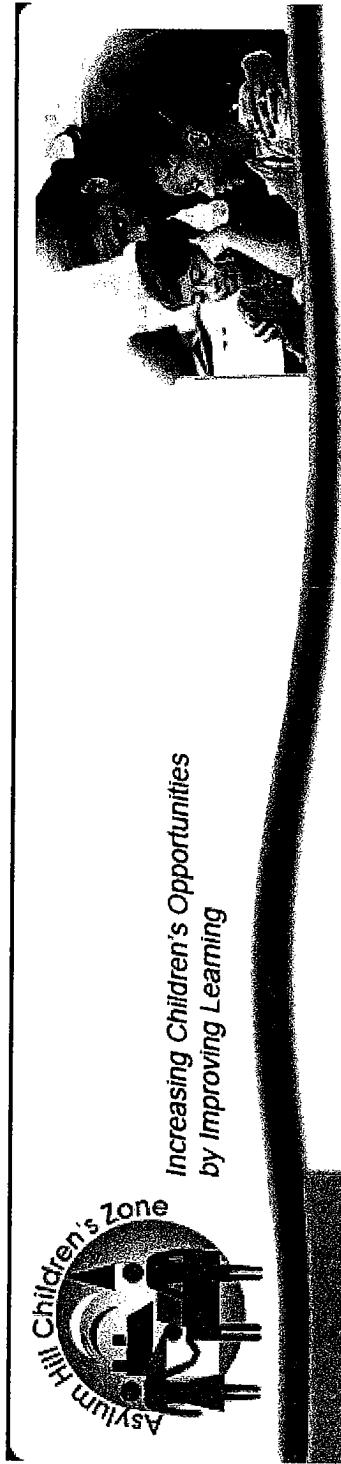
If you really want to change the lives of inner-city kids, change everything – their schools, their families, their neighborhood – all at once.

Harlem Children's Zone working thesis

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## Who We Are

The Asylum Hill Children's Zone (AHCZ) is patterned on the successful Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ). Harlem's Zone is a social program unlike any other – rebuilding a real community around children where everyone is focused on their learning. “It's exactly the right model. It combines family, community, and school – starts at the youngest age and is really a soup to nuts approach.” Commissioner of New York City Schools, Joel Klein.

The Zone is helping to bring our American Dream to fruition – that the average child growing up in the inner city can make it and become a productive member of society. It depends on public and private funding because everyone has an interest in public education. The Zone in Asylum Hill does not possess the resources that Harlem's Zone has. Our focus is on West Middle Elementary School, the only elementary school in the neighborhood. We work with parents both of school-age children, and expectant parents via the Baby Academy. Helping parents manage their challenges permits them to place more attention on their children.

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## Who We Are

continued . . .



### Now is the Right Time

Several years ago the Harlem Children's Zone decided to expand its sphere of influence, to share best practices and consulting advice, and to see how its mission could be extended to other locales by creating a Practitioners Institute. AHCZ was one of the first organizations to take advantage of this unique opportunity. A relationship with the Harlem Children's Zone has provided the operational experience and best practices necessary to make an immediate impact our neighborhood now, and hopefully be a model for other Hartford neighborhoods in the future.



The fact that inner-city children are not learning despite the number of programs in place is being more widely recognized. People from many different arenas (politics, education, and business) are now focusing more on children's learning. Examples are the Mayor's Blueprint for Young Children and cabinet focused on children ages 0 to 8, the Governor's advisor (Janice Gruendel) for young children, increased budgets for educating young children, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Brighter Futures Initiative, and expansion of the Connecticut Children's Trust Nurturing Families Network to more Hartford neighborhoods including Asylum Hill.

Gruendel for young children, increased budgets for educating young children, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Brighter Futures Initiative, and expansion of the Connecticut Children's Trust Nurturing Families Network to more Hartford neighborhoods including Asylum Hill.

Collaboration is a fundamental element of the Asylum Hill Zone. Given the lack of results, too many programs for children already exist in Hartford today. Some estimates put the number of programs at 178 for a cost of between \$300 and \$400 million annually. The need is for increased effectiveness through coordination, collaboration, even consolidation, and certainly more accountability.

Major organizations with resources are located in Asylum Hill and many are taking an active part in programs to help improve children's learning. These organizations include Aetna, Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Boys and Girls Club, Catholic Charities, CPTV, The Hartford, St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center, and the Salvation Army.

### What We Do

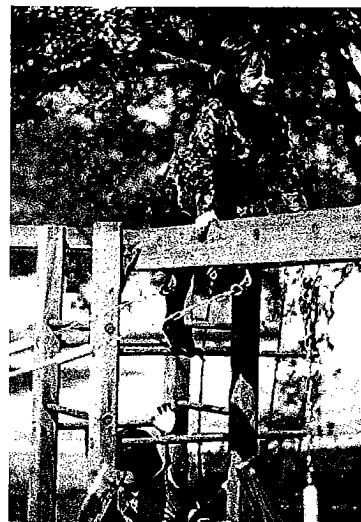
AHCZ is focusing initially on West Middle Elementary School, the only



elementary school in the Zone. Our mission is to improve learning for children, which requires working not only with children but also their parents – usually single mothers. Assisting parents to get more involved with their children's learning is critical. One success indicator is increased attendance at West Middle PTA meetings and other school events. We are also measurably improving parenting for newborns and young children via our Baby Academy.

The Zone is working to improve learning directly with tutors who help third and fourth graders read better. Disruptive classroom behavior makes learning difficult, especially in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. AHCZ provides assistance to teachers and administrators in reducing classroom interruptions, and works with particularly challenging students to increase academic performance. Several after-school activities have been implemented, and additional resources contributed aimed at improving learning for students.

### **How It Is Being Accomplished**



To really change the lives of inner-city kids, we must change everything – their schools, their families, their neighborhoods – all at once. Making these changes requires an entire community effort, and requires that many interested organizations work together. It is imperative to empower parents on the Hill to take more control of their own and their children's lives. We start at a very early age to improve learning – hence The Baby Academy which is training parents to make a difference even before the child is born.

We also need the resources to focus on children for many years – stability and continuity, which requires many organizations working together.

The true benefit of active collaboration is an overall sense of ownership that the community takes for children and their families who live within Asylum Hill. For example, Zone Outreach Workers stay in touch with families and when problems arise they are there to help find solutions. Problems faced include a need for medical care, lack of food, financial issues, difficulties with landlords, need for a new bed, a lack of warm clothing, and much more. Children and families need to know that a safety net exists. This fact instills confidence that reduces the stress of living so more energy can be focused on children's learning. The idea of ownership also extends to the parents – helping to empower them to take more ownership of their own and their children's lives which includes increased education and finding a satisfying career.

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*Increasing Children's Opportunities  
by Improving Learning*



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## Programs

### **West Middle School Initiative**

This initiative is focused on improving student learning at West Middle Elementary School, the only elementary school in Asylum Hill. Both children and parents must contribute to improve learning, so this program has several components. For example, we provide tutors to improve reading at school and meet with parents to encourage them to read with their children at home. To create a community focused on learning, parents must also be involved with their children's education. Unfortunately, many parents are focused on meeting their family's basic needs, and are not spending enough time helping with their children's education. AHCZ staff spends time with parents who need assistance with a variety of issues such as food, clothing, housing, and employment. Our objective is to empower parents to take a leadership role in determining their children's future. [Read More](#)



### **The Baby Academy**

The Harlem Children's Zone started teaching expectant parents how to provide better for their very young children in the late 1990s. Our Baby Academy is now a ten-week series of Saturday workshops based on the experience gained in Harlem. Parents learn about the birth process, good nutrition, child development, immunization, the importance of reading to children, discipline, keeping kids safe, and raising happy, productive children. [Read More](#)



[Read More on Other Programs](#)

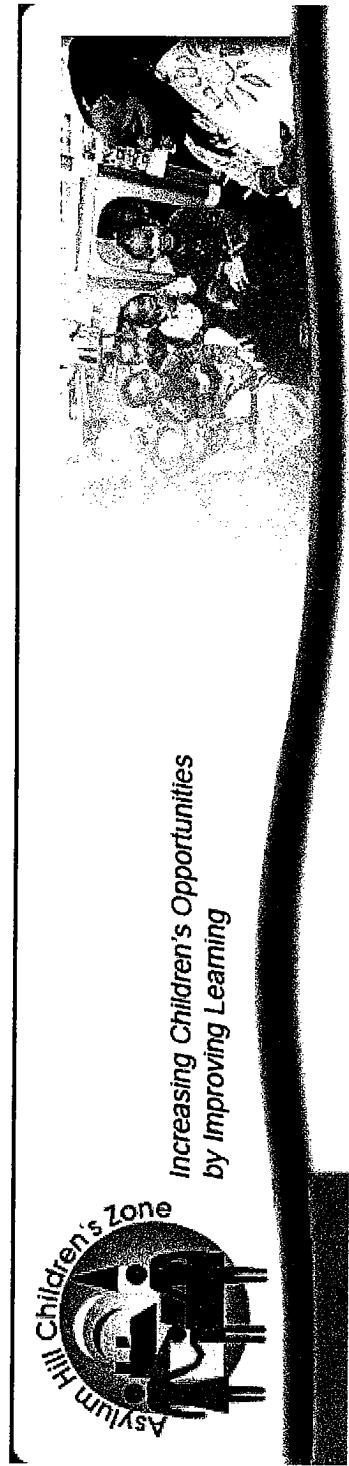
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## Harlem Children's Zone

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*If you really want to change the lives of inner-city kids, change everything – their schools, their families, their neighborhood – all at once.*

*Harlem Children's Zone working thesis*

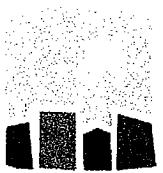
It is well documented that the United States is failing to educate inner-city children. Test scores annually demonstrate this failure. We **must** change the way children learn. An exciting project in Harlem is doing just that – changing the system for educating young people in the inner-city. The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) has a demonstrated track record of enhancing the quality of life for children, families, and communities.

Harlem's Zone is built on two major tenets: it takes a **critical mass of involved adults** to raise children to be productive members of society, and second, we must **make changes as early as possible** in the child's life – preferably even before birth. HCZ is a social program unlike any other – rebuilding a real community around children where everyone is focused on their learning. "*It's exactly the right model. It combines family, community, and school – starts at the youngest age and is really a soup to nuts approach.*" Commissioner of New York City Schools, Joel Klein. [Read more](#)

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## Harlem Children's Z O N E      continued . . .

The Harlem Zone provides some 20 programs and partners with other agencies to create a safety net for children. Most of these programs are not unique. The true benefit is an overall sense of *ownership* that the Zone takes for children and their families who live within the boundaries. As HCZ President Geoffrey Canada says, *These are our kids, and we'll do whatever is necessary to improve their learning.* Thus, Zone staff stays in touch with the family and when problems arise they are there to help find solutions. Children and families know that a safety net exists which reduces the stress of living so more energy can be focused on children's learning. Zone programs also empower parents and other residents by providing the skills and confidence for them to take more ownership of their own lives and better enable their children to succeed in school.



The Harlem Children's Zone is also extraordinary in that funding is from private and public sources combined. The 2008 budget of \$70 million includes \$40 million from private sources. HCZ has opened a new facility on 125<sup>th</sup> Street which is home to the charter school – Promise Academy. The longer term plan is to open four charter schools in Harlem.

More information is available on the web site [www.hcz.org](http://www.hcz.org).

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